

# MANUAL

OF THE

# Free Public Library

New Bedford, Mass.

1912

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Library organized August 16, 1852.

First in the State under the statute authorizing municipal support of libraries.

One of the first Free Public Libraries in the United States.

Opened for use March 3, 1853.

Corner stone of old Library Building laid August 28, 1856.

Corner stone of present Library Building laid August 24, 1908.

This building erected 1838-9 for a Town Hall and Public Market.

Architecture Doric.

Architect was Russell Warren.

Used for municipal purposes till 1906, when it was partially destroyed by fire. Rebuilt by the city for Free Public Library.

Active work of rebuilding started April 13, 1908. Nat C. Smith, architect.

Building completed October, 1910.

Formally opened December 1, 1910.

Library contains 126,000 books, 30,000 pamphlets.

Specialties — Genealogical works, Quakeriana, textile works, books on whaling.

Ground floor, first room on the right, **NEWSPAPER ROOM** (40 papers taken), whaling pictures on the walls.

Across the corridor **JUVENILE ROOM**. 3,000 books for young readers, children's magazines, etc.

On main floor, north, **REFERENCE ROOM**, containing books of reference and magazines (Library subscribes to 270). **Information Desk** in this room. Requests for information should be presented to attendant in charge of this room. The telephone is available for this service.

Main floor, south, **INGRAHAM HALL**, named for Robert C. Ingraham, librarian for 48 years. This room is main reading room, contains several thousand selected books in all classes of literature. Books may be read in the room, or charged at the desk and taken out on cards.

Rotunda. South side, **LIBRARIAN'S OFFICES**. North side, room of **CHIEF ASSISTANT**, and **STAFF ROOM**.

**DELIVERY DESK**—all books are returned here, and books taken from the stack are charged.

On top floor, reached by elevator, **ART ROOM**, on the north, containing art books and periodicals. Paintings by William Bradford, R. S. Gifford, and Albert Bierstadt.

**LECTURE ROOM** across the corridor, containing paintings by R. S. Gifford, Clement N. Swift, Louis H. Richardson, and wood carving by Leander A. Plummer.

This room can be used by associations of a literary, artistic, scientific, or similar nature, on application to the Board of Trustees.

**ROOM** for the **BLIND** and **MEDICAL LIBRARY** on north side of rotunda.

**STUDY ROOMS** across on south side.

These rooms are for the use of students who may wish to consult, at one time, many books on one subject without interruption.

The **CORRIDORS** contain many portraits, and a painting of the Birth of the Whale Fishery by William A. Wall.

**GENEALOGICAL ROOM**, containing family records, New England history, etc., etc. Leonard papers and Peirce manuscript genealogies may be consulted here.

**PATENT ROOM.** Reports of U. S. Patent Office. Northwest corner.

**TRUSTEES' ROOM** at west end of upper corridor. Bierstadt's "Rocky Mountains," (the Selkirk range, near the Canadian border,) on outer wall of Trustees' Room.

Strangers are welcome to the building at all times. They are invited to sign the Visitors' Book at the Delivery Desk.

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The Librarian and his assistants will be very glad to answer any questions concerning the Library Building and its contents.

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Residents of the city and others who may furnish proper credentials are allowed to take two or more books, provided only one is fiction. There is no absolute restriction on the number of books, except as noted above.

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Books which may be asked for, and which are not in, will be reserved upon application to the attendant at the Delivery Desk.

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Blank forms requesting the purchase of new books may be obtained at the Delivery Desk.

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The bulletin boards on either side of the rotunda are used to give special notices of art exhibitions, lectures, etc .